



2024 Industry Trends Prediction

Presented by Spiro's Strategy,
Measurement, and Innovation Team

Kicking off '24

As we look to the future of experiential marketing, anticipate a shift towards multifaceted strategies that will redefine audience engagement. Key areas set to impact the industry include sustainable practices, deepening audience understanding, innovative sponsorship approaches, and the rise of omnichannel strategies.

We expect a continued push towards the integration of AI in experiential events as well as a proliferation of activations and engagements with a foundation in nostalgic content offering new dimensions to brand interactions.

These evolving elements are poised to further shape how brands connect with diverse audiences, offering enriched experiences in the ever-changing landscape of experiential marketing.

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Maximize Sustainable Impact

Looking into the year ahead, transparent communication emerges as a key strategy in sustainability. This approach demands a clear and honest disclosure of environmental practices and their impacts, fostering trust and engaging audiences in the sustainability journey.

This coming year will see a pivotal shift in the application of sustainability within the industry. What was once a more abstract concept is now evolving into a structured approach with specific, measurable, and achievable targets. This transition reflects the global shift towards commitment to reducing environmental impact through more concrete and measurable practices.

To elevate your brand's event sustainability, consider these actionable steps:

Implement a Digital Sustainability Dashboard

Leverage technology to provide real-time tracking and transparent reporting of environmental impacts. This tool will not only enhance accountability but also offer insights for continuous improvement.

Adopt Eco-Smart Practices

Commit to immediate, impactful changes. This includes transitioning to digital content, utilizing eco-conscious event materials, and striving towards waste reduction or elimination. Such practices demonstrate a proactive approach to environmental stewardship.

Enhance Community Impact

Make a positive difference in the communities hosting your events. This can be achieved by sourcing materials and services from local vendors, thereby supporting local economies. Additionally, consider donating surplus resources to local organizations, further extending the benefits of your sustainability efforts.

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Understanding Your Audience

In 2024, the crux of successful experiential marketing lies in an in-depth understanding of your audience.

This year, as the industry leans towards more personalized engagements and experiences, the ability to accurately gauge and respond to audience preferences becomes imperative.

Brands face the challenge of adapting to dynamic audience needs against a backdrop of evolving trends like festivalization, omnichannel engagement, and cost-conscious event planning.

Key Strategies

- **Invest in Behavioral Analytics:** Go beyond surface-level insights to analyze audience behavior patterns deeply. This strategic focus helps tailor events that resonate more effectively with attendees.
- **Proactive Audience Engagement:** Shift from reactive to proactive engagement, using tools like interactive surveys and social media to gather insights before and during events.
- **Personalization at Scale:** Utilize these insights to ensure each touchpoint across your event is aligned with audience preferences – for both the delivery medium and messaging.

In essence, 2024 marks a year where understanding and engaging with your audience transcends traditional methods, laying the foundation for more impactful and meaningful experiential marketing campaigns.



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Transforming Event Sponsorship

The evolution of the industry over recent years demands that brands rethink their sponsorship tactics, moving beyond mere impression counts to drive deeper, more meaningful impact. The future of successful sponsorships lies in weaving emotionally resonant narratives, underpinned by data-driven omnichannel approaches, and fostering value-driven partnerships.

Essentials of Modern Sponsorship

- **Brand Storytelling through Meaningful Partnerships:** Align with partners sharing similar values to effectively communicate your brand's story. For instance, a brand focusing on innovative technology should partner with events that integrate cutting-edge tech, thereby enhancing the attendee experience and forging stronger audience connections.
- **Brand Purpose and Social Responsibility:** Integrating social responsibility into every sponsorship package is crucial. Effective sponsorships convey a brand's commitment through storytelling, whether it's sponsoring sustainable initiatives or community projects, thereby creating emotionally compelling narratives.

Data-Driven Omnichannel Strategy

- **Omnichannel Engagement:** With Millennials and Gen Z becoming a larger part of the audience, adopt an omnichannel approach using various touchpoints like email, social media, and live events. This strategy ensures a cohesive brand story and facilitates comprehensive success measurement.
- **Value Demonstration through Data:** Utilize both qualitative and quantitative data to showcase sponsorship value. Success through metrics like impressions and leads must still be quantified, but also qualitatively assess by evaluating goal achievement and attendee experience impact. This dual approach offers a complete view of how sponsorships meet objectives.



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In summary, the key to impactful sponsorships in the coming years is the combination of resonant brand storytelling and robust, data-backed omnichannel strategies.

Omnichannel Shift

Brands will focus more on adopting an omnichannel approach in 2024. This becomes crucial as we venture into the future of experiential marketing. This strategy is about seeing individual events not as discrete marketing campaigns, but as comprehensive showcases encompassing all facets of the company. These activations and events are an opportunity to showcase the full breadth of an organization's products, operations, culture, and values, so the planning shouldn't be siloed among sales and marketing – something that may require a perspective shift from brands' current approach.

Key Elements of this Holistic Approach

- **Consistent Brand Experience Across Channels:** An omnichannel strategy ensures that every interaction, whether physical or digital, accurately reflects the company's diverse aspects. This holistic representation enhances the brand's authenticity and resonance with the audience.
- **Total Brand Contribution:** By viewing events as integral components of the company, focus shifts to evaluating their contribution to the overall business objectives. This also helps provide cross-departmental clarity into each event's contribution to each group's overall objectives through financial ROI, brand engagement (ROE), and alignment with company goals (ROO).
- **Strategic Allocation Reflecting Company-Wide Goals:** Budgeting for events often comes down to the ability of an event to deliver on objectives for both company-wide and business group objectives. An omnichannel approach helps align events more closely with broader business strategies.
- **Audience Engagement Beyond Marketing:** This approach involves engaging with audiences in a manner that mirrors the company's approach in other areas, such as customer service, innovation, and community involvement.

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In this evolved model, experiential marketing is reimagined as a dynamic platform that mirrors the entire company's ethos, not limited to its marketing narrative. It becomes a tool for holistic brand storytelling, where each event is an authentic representation rather than performative, promising deeper and more meaningful connections with the audience.



AI in Events

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the way brands engage with audiences at tradeshows and large-scale events. Understanding the strategic use of AI, from generative content to predictive analytics, is key for brands looking to create a standout presence.

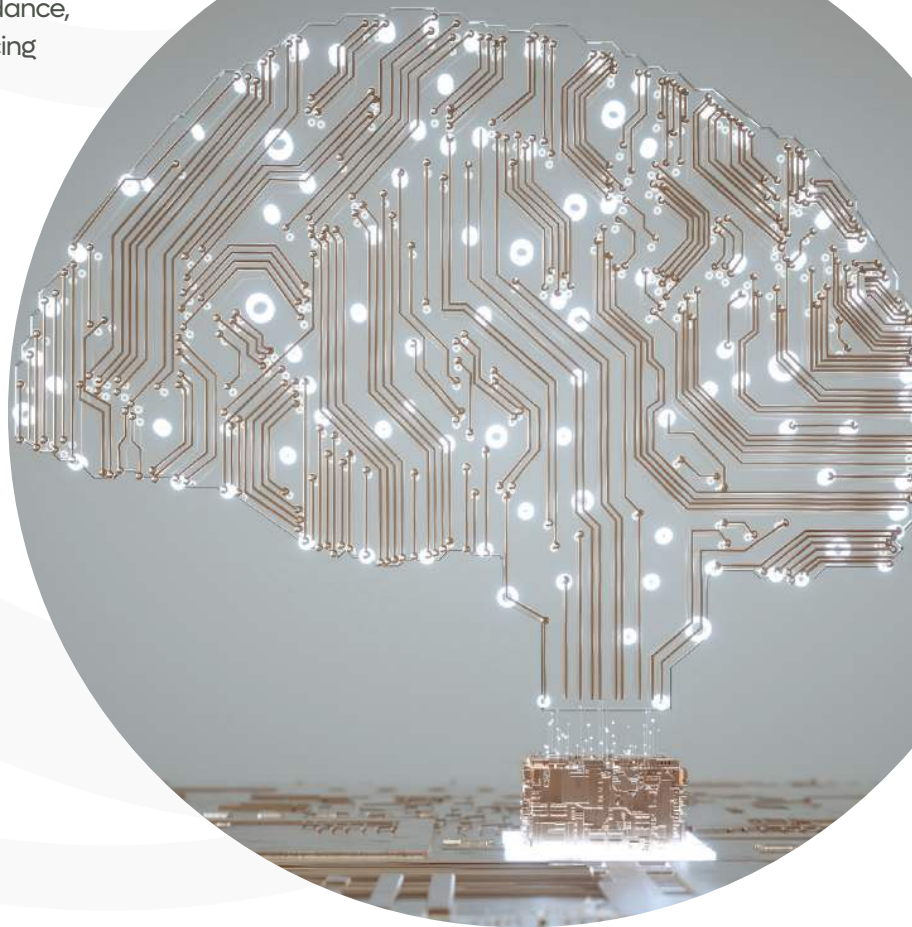
AI-Powered Engagement at Tradeshows and Events:

- **Customized Brand Activations:** AI can power interactive kiosks or augmented reality experiences, creating unique, engaging activations that reflect the brand's identity.
- **Real-Time Audience Insights:** Use AI for instant sentiment analysis and audience behavior tracking at the booth, enabling brands to tailor their engagement strategies on the spot.
- **Personalized Interaction:** AI-driven chatbots or virtual assistants can provide tailored information, guidance, or even entertainment to booth visitors, enhancing their experience.

Contextualizing AI for Booths and Activations:

- **Generative AI for Content Creation:** Utilize AI to create dynamic digital content for displays, activations, or social media, aligned with the event's theme and audience interests/preferences.
- **Predictive Analytics for Audience Engagement:** Employ AI to analyze previous engagement data and predict attendee behavior, optimizing booth activities and interactions.

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AI in Events, cont.



When considering the integration of AI into event booths and activations, it's essential to deliberate on how this technology can contribute to the overall objectives and improve the attendee experience. Thoughtful implementation of AI may elevate the engagement and effectiveness of an event, but it requires careful planning and consideration of several key factors.

AI Considerations Checklist

- **Determine AI's Suitability:** Assess if AI aligns with the brand's goals for the event and if it can effectively enhance the booth experience. It's especially vital to determine whether the type of technology or model is appropriate for the task at hand.
- **Human-AI Synergy:** Maintain a balance between AI-driven features and human elements in the booth design and interactions.
- **Ethical and Transparent Usage:** Be transparent about AI usage, especially in data collection, and ensure it adheres to ethical standards.

AI, while a powerful tool, should be used judiciously particularly when it comes to new technology like LLMs. Brands should focus on using AI to genuinely enhance visitor experiences at their booths or activations, rather than adopting it just for the sake of innovation or to keep up with trends.



Retro Revival

Nostalgia will emerge as a powerful tool in experiential marketing and tradeshow engagement, resonating across various generational cohorts. By tapping into cultural references from appropriate decades, brands can create deeply engaging and memorable experiences. This approach involves more than just revisiting the past; it's about forging emotional connections through shared memories that resonate with a diverse audience.

Because of the focus on renewing retro pop culture campaigns, products, and media, incorporating elements from the past provides a unique opportunity to evoke nostalgia and, when applicable, build on renewed pop culture movements e.g. Barbie. This can range from retro-themed booth designs to interactive experiences that reflect iconic trends, music, and technology from these eras. The key is to weave these nostalgic elements into the fabric of the event in a way that enhances the overall brand experience.

Strategies for Leveraging Nostalgia:

- **Interactive Nostalgic Activations:** Use retro gaming consoles, early internet aesthetics, or pop culture references as interactive elements in booth designs.
- **Customized Content:** Develop content and themes reflecting the visual and cultural style of past decades, appealing to the shared memories of attendees.
- **Immersive Experiences:** Create settings or activities that transport attendees to a different time, like VR experiences or themed photo booths.

Additional Considerations:

- **Target Audience Resonance:** Tailor nostalgic elements based on the specific demographics of your target audience, such as Millennials and Gen Z's affinity for the late 90s/early 2000s or Gen X and the 80s/early 90s.
- **Authenticity and Relevance:** Ensure that nostalgic elements authentically align with the brand's identity and the event's objectives rather than doing it simply for the sake of doing it.



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By thoughtfully integrating nostalgia into experiential marketing strategies, brands can enhance audience engagement, creating memorable experiences that resonate with attendees of all ages.

Conclusion

While last year was a period of thriving and adapting, we believe 2024 is a year poised for aggressive innovation, underpinned by a deep understanding of our audience and the strategic use of technology.

This shift towards intentional and insight-driven change is set to redefine the landscape of experiential marketing, blending advanced technological solutions with a nuanced grasp of audience needs, driving forward a new era of engagement and connection.

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